

**Emergency Mine Evacuation
Emergency Temporary Standard Compliance Guide, Volume 3
June 16, 2006**

Immediate Notification

Q1. Will the initial call to either an MSHA district office or the 1-800 number to report an accident be sufficient to comply with the 15 minute requirement even though the mine operator may not speak with an MSHA employee?

A. Yes.

Training

Q2. Do contract employees have to be part of an escapeway drill?

A. Yes. All miners, including contract employees, who are present in the mine during a drill, must participate in the escapeway drills required by paragraph 75.1502(c).

Q3. If miners do not work on a section, do they have to participate in escapeway drills?

A. Yes. All miners working underground must participate in these drills.

Q4. Are mine operators required to conduct six-week drills specified in paragraph 75.383(b) in light of the ETS' provisions for emergency mine evacuation drills under §75.1502?

A. No. MSHA would consider the mine operator complying with the drill requirements (frequency, number of participants, and content) of paragraph 75.383(b) when a mine operator conducts a drill for each shift that includes all miners under §75.1502. We are considering combining and reconciling all training and drill requirements into one standard.

Lifelines

Q5. Can a conveyor belt be substituted as a lifeline in a primary or alternate escapeway?

A. No. Due to the inherent hazards and obstacles associated with conveyor belts, they are not considered to be "equivalent devices."

Q6. Can the pull cord associated with the conveyor belt be used as the lifeline if equipped with directional indicators?

A. No. For the same reasons as conveyor belts, the pull cord is not considered an "equivalent device" to lifelines under the ETS.

Q7. Do we need to have a lifeline in the track entry if the track is well marked with reflectors and directional indicators?

A. Yes. A track entry that serves as an escapeway must have a lifeline because tracks are not considered to be "equivalent devices" to lifelines under the ETS. Materials found in mines, such as rock dust and water, can easily obscure any reflectors or directional indicators on tracks, making them ineffective as lifelines.

Q8. Is an audible signal acceptable in place of a lifeline as an alternate method of compliance?

A. No. An audible signal is not an "equivalent device" that provides tactile indication of the direction of travel.

Q9. Do single-sided reflectors placed at 25 foot intervals along a lifeline meet the requirements of the ETS?

A. Yes. Single-sided reflectors placed at 25 foot intervals are acceptable, provided that directional cones or equivalent devices that provide tactile feedback are also installed at intervals not to exceed 100 feet.

Q10. Do combination cones and single-sided reflectors placed at 25 foot increments along a lifeline meet the requirements of the ETS?

A. Yes. The combination cones and single-sided reflectors placed at 25 foot intervals are also acceptable.

Q11. Do lifelines and SCSR storage locations have to be moved if an escapeway is temporarily re-routed?

A. Yes. Lifelines and SCSR storage locations must comply with the requirements of the ETS for all required designated escapeways.

Q12. Are lifelines required to be installed in a temporarily idled mine with no working sections?

A. No. Since a temporarily idled mine has no working sections, it is not required to have escapeways. Therefore, lifelines are not required under this limited situation.

SCSRs

Q13. Do additional SCSRs need to be stored on hoisting equipment, such as slope cars and elevators?

A. No.

Q14. Can the plan required in paragraph 75.1714-4(c) be satisfied by the statement that “a sufficient number of SCSRs for all the persons working inby shall be stored at this location,” or is a specific number (quantity) required?

A. No. A specific number (quantity) of SCSRs, as determined by the mine operator, must be included in the SCSR storage plan.

Q15. Do the stored SCSRs have to be examined before the start of each shift?

A. No. Under 75.1714-4(d), the stored SCSR units must be examined according to manufacturers' specifications (typically every 90 days).

Q16. How can operators meet storage requirements in adverse temperature situations?

A. SCSR storage facilities can be insulated, heated, cooled, or relocated to provide the appropriate protection depending on the individual mine environment. Contact the SCSR manufacturer for recommended storage practices.

Q17. Are signs for SCSR storage locations required in all entries, or just the escapeway and adjacent entries, similar to the man door sign regulation (existing paragraph 75.333(c)(2))?

A. Signs are required in all entries to direct miners to SCSR storage locations.

Q18. Does 75.1714-4(e) require a reflective self-rescuer sign on mobile equipment going into and out of the mine?

A. Yes, all SCSR storage locations must be marked with reflective signs, including SCSR storage locations on mobile equipment.